



School Safety Newsletter

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Teenagers Say Depression and Anxiety Are Major Issues Among Their Peers

The New York Times, February 20, 2019

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/20/health/teenage-depression-statistics.html>

Most American teenagers — across demographic groups — see depression and anxiety as major problems among their peers, a new survey by the Pew Research Center found.

The survey found that 70 percent of teenagers saw mental health as a big issue. Fewer teenagers cited bullying, drug addiction or gangs as major problems; those from low-income households were more likely to do so.

The consistency of the responses about mental health issues across gender, race and income lines was striking, said Juliana Horowitz, an associate director of research at the center.

The survey also asked respondents if they considered alcohol consumption or teen pregnancy to be major problems among their peers. Half of the teenagers from households earning less than \$30,000 said alcohol was a major problem; that number decreased to 43 percent among teenagers in households earning more than \$75,000.

Teenagers diverged most drastically across income lines on the issue of teen pregnancy. Fifty-five percent of teenagers in lower-income households said it was a major problem among their peers. Just 22 percent of teenagers in wealthier households agreed.

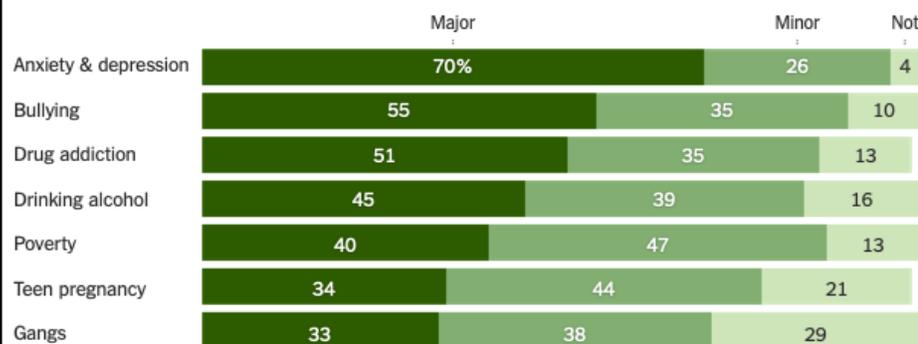
The survey (<https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2019/02/20/most-u-s-teens-see-anxiety-and-depression-as-a-major-problem-among-their-peers/>) of 920 teenagers ages 13 to 17 in the United States was conducted online and by phone in the fall. In their report, the researchers broke down results by income level and gender but not race or ethnicity, citing the small sample size.

Some psychologists have tied a growth in mental health issues among teenagers to increased social media use, academic pressure and frightening events like terror attacks and school shootings.

Teenagers who grew up in the post-9/11 era, and amid many school shootings, may have anxiety tied to an environment filled with dire warnings about safety, said Philip Kendall, director of the Child and Adolescent Anxiety Disorders

Teenagers see depression and anxiety as a major problem

The share of teens who perceive each of the following as major or minor problems among their peers. All but 4 percent cited anxiety and depression as a problem.



Source: Pew Research Center

*Protecting our
future through
information
sharing*

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Teenagers Say Depression and Anxiety Are Major Issues Amon Their Peers (Continued)

Clinic at Temple University in Philadelphia.

His center often helps children distinguish between the possible and the probable, to help put anxiety about frightening but rare events in proper context.

Another major stressor is constant surveillance by peers on social media, and the “fear of missing out” it can generate, he added. Again, he said, guidance about how to understand social media — for example, a person taking 50 photos to get one perfect image — can help to dispel anxiety.

Increased rates of mental health issues could also be tied to better screening practices, noted Lynn Bufka, an associate executive director at the American Psychological Association.

But it is still cause for concern, she said. Teenagers are dealing with rapid changes to their bodies, hormones and lives in an era of

nonstop information overload, and they need help developing coping strategies. “It becomes really important for the adults around teens to be stable influences in their lives, to give them space for them to talk,” she said.

A study released in 2017 (<https://www.aappublications.org/news/2017/05/04/PASSuicide050417>) found that the number of children and adolescents admitted to children’s hospitals for thoughts of self-harm or suicide had more than doubled from 2008 to 2015, echoing trends in federal data.

Dr. Bufka said her top advice for adults worried about teenagers in their lives was simple: Listen, without “pouring on advice” or judging too much, and give them the opportunity to talk to a counselor or psychologist if needed.

“Let them know that you’ve got their back,” she said.

[If you are having thoughts of suicide, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 (TALK) or go to SpeakingOfSuicide.com/resources for a list of additional resources.]

Trends in youth Substance Use Continue to Evolve

Petskey News, February 21, 2019

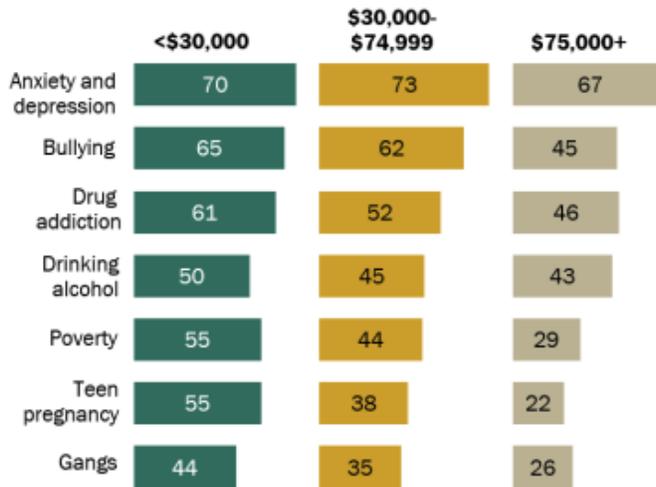
https://www.petoskeynews.com/featured-pnr/trends-in-youth-substance-use-continue-to-evolve/article_8aa2cbfd-1ec9-583b-a1cf-5aa19982dac9.html

For parents, keeping tabs on everything students in area schools are doing can be a daunting task. From classes and grades, to extracurricular activities and social interactions, there is a good deal for parents to monitor. It’s an even more difficult task for parents be in the know about new trends in illegal or dangerous substance use that their children could fall into.

Long gone are the days when smelling alcohol on a teen’s breath, or being wary for the smell of marijuana smoke, were among parents’ top detection tools. Both Scott Kelly with Charlevoix-based Bay Area Substance Abuse Education Services (known extensively in the area as BASES) and Susan Pulaski, community health coordinator with the Health Department of Northwest Michigan, said that the landscape of substance use among teens is changing

Mental health concerns cross income boundaries, but teen pregnancy is seen as a much bigger problem by teens from lower-income households

% of teens saying each of the following is a major problem among people their age in the community where they live, by household income



Source: Survey of U.S. teens ages 13 to 17 conducted Sept. 17-Nov. 25, 2018.
“Most U.S. Teens See Anxiety and Depression as a Major Problem Among Their Peers”
PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Monthly Webinars!

First Wednesday of Every Month

at 10 am

(Except January, July, and August).

Next Webinars

Wednesday, April 3, 2019

Each webinar has a round table discussion at the end. Questions are always welcome!

To participate, you must be a vetted member. For more information please email schoolsafety@isp.state.il.us

Trends in youth Substance Use Continue to Evolve (Continued)

almost daily and it's largely tied to one phenomenon — vaping.

“Vaping,” is the term for using electronic cigarettes and other devices that allow a person to inhale water vapor infused with various chemicals. Originally designed as an alternative to smoking, the types and uses of these devices have “exploded” in recent years, both Kelly and Pulaski said.

And the trend goes way beyond the rebellious “smoking in the boys room” activities of teens decades ago. Kelly and Pulaski note the devices are dangerous on many levels. First, they now come in many forms, some of which look nothing like any sort of vapor inhaling device. “There are so many sizes and shapes of these things it's difficult to keep up with it,” Kelly said. He said the devices can be very easy to conceal, because often they are small and/or look like everyday items such as a pen or USB storage stick. Kelly noted recently learning of one vaping device that looks like an inhaler which a person might use to treat asthma. Pulaski said even simply looking at vaping devices as a smoking substitute comes with dangers. First, she noted that while most teens understand that smoking cigarettes is bad for them, there is a perception among many that because vaping doesn't involve inhaling smoke, it is safe.



However, both Kelly and Pulaski noted whatever small safety gains might be found in the absence of smoke are more than wiped out by the fact that the nicotine levels in many of these vaping products are much higher than in most cigarettes. Nicotine is a stimulant that is highly addictive, especially in higher doses, they both said. Ingesting nicotine through vaping devices is just the tip of the iceberg. Both Pulaski and Kelly said many other substance can be inhaled through the devices, such as THC, the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana.

“One of the things we've been emphasizing to people is this is a ‘drug delivery’ device, not just a substitute for smoking. You can put so many things in them,” Kelly said. Both Kelly and Pulaski pointed to a 2018 Michigan Profile for Healthy Youth survey of students in seventh, ninth and 11th grade during the 2017-18 school year that showed nearly 25 percent of surveyed students in Emmet County had used a vaping device in the previous 30 days, and more than 35 percent had done so among surveyed students in Charlevoix County. That compares with 12.4 percent and 25.4 percent respectively for alcohol use in the two counties.

Kelly said in his experience, many — he estimated around 80 percent — of teens caught vaping or with vaping devices in schools are “naive” about it. “These are the kids you typically would expect. They heard about it and they wanted to try it,” Kelly said.

Another concern Kelly expressed is a perception among many people — especially teens — that THC is safe, when in fact, he said, the amount of the substance that is in many marijuana strains — and also can be found in many liquids that can be inhaled via vaping — is much more potent than decades ago.

In fact, Pulaski said it isn't necessarily use of marijuana cigarettes that parents need to be looking for among children, as today THC comes in so many more forms and potency levels. “It's not the same product that they (parents) might have known about in the past,” she said. “THC levels are so much higher, they shouldn't even call it marijuana anymore, they should just call it THC. We know the effects of the lower doses on developing brains, but we don't have research on what that (higher) level (of THC) is going to do to developing brain.”

Both Pulaski and Kelly said they are concerned that products with THC will be more likely to fall into the hands of teens now that voters approved a ballot measure in November legalizing the use of marijuana for recreational purposes for people over the age of 21.

Both Kelly and Pulaski said it's difficult for even them to keep up with the constantly changing substance use landscape, but both encourage parents to educate themselves as much as possible and to pay attention to their children and look for changes in their behavior and have conversations with them about their concerns.

“I like to compare it to being a bank teller. You have to know what the real bill looks like so you can spot the fake one. In the same way, parents need to be in tune with their kids to so they can notice when something has changed.”

He noted that the hard part for many parents is identifying the difference between the ups and downs of typical adolescent life and changes that might be caused by other things, such as substance abuse.

To learn more about the efforts of the SAFE in Northern Michigan organization, visit <https://www.safeinm.com/>

Police: Teen's Nicotine Withdrawal Leads to Threatening Social Media Post

Journal News, March 11, 2019

<https://www.journal-news.com/news/police-teen-nicotine-withdrawal-leads-threatening-threatening-social-media-post/F31BQ0qvRoHIsf9eFpfLoM/>

A police officer on duty in Talawanda High School was approached by several students in the cafeteria at 11:30 a.m. Feb. 25 showing him a Snapchat post with an apparent threat of school violence. The officer photographed the message and contacted the principal and assistant principals. A police lieutenant was also called in.

The post with a picture of a math test read, "I promise if I can't hit a juul or something today Im shooting up this school (sic)."

The location of the student was determined and he was taken out of class and searched for weapons. None were found on his person, in his bookbag or the vehicle in which he arrived at school that day.

The student was questioned by a detective and admitted making the post but said it was done out of frustration and nicotine withdrawal. He said he did not have the plans or means to cause anyone harm at school.

The officer contacted the county prosecutor's office and was advised to not move forward with charges but the school pursued administrative discipline which included a 10-day suspension with a recommendation of expulsion. The officer confirmed with his parents and grandfather he did not have access to weapons at the household.

Florida Teen Kills Herself in School Auditorium After Asking to Leave Class, Sheriff Says

CBS News, March 14, 2019

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/lake-mary-high-school-shooting-suicide-teen-kills-herself-in-shooting-florida-sheriff-says-2019-03-13/>

A 17-year-old student killed herself at an Orlando-area high school after excusing herself from class on the morning of March 13, 2019, investigators say. The student shot herself with a handgun just before 8 a.m. at Lake Mary High School, Seminole County Sheriff Dennis Lemma said at a news conference.

Lemma said the 11th grade student was in class around 7:50 a.m., just before the end of first period, and asked her teacher to go to the bathroom. She went to an isolated area in the school's auditorium, and a gunshot was heard in the building about five to 10 minutes later, Lemma said.

Two school resource officers and a school nurse responded within a minute and attempted to revive the girl, but were unsuccessful, Lemma said.

Lemma said he doesn't believe any students witnessed the shooting.

"It appears that she went out of her way to do it in an area where nobody else was at," Lemma said.

The school was placed on lockdown, and Lemma said he notified the school community via the PA system. He said the school is safe and there was no active threat. Parents were also notified via an automated voicemail, reports CBS affiliate WKMG.

Lemma said the girl's family has been notified. Her identity isn't yet being released.

"Every person's stomach is in knots right now thinking about this tragedy," Lemma said.

Lemma said his office is continuing to investigate who the gun belonged to and how the girl obtained it. He said grief counselors were being made available at the school, and encouraged anyone struggling with depression or mental health issues to ask for help.

"Let's do what we can to make sure we're talking about this," Lemma said. "Let's not turn a blind eye to it, and prevent situations like this from ever happening again."

Resources for Schools regarding Suicide:

After a Suicide: A Toolkit for Schools, Second Edition: <https://www.sprc.org/resources-programs/after-suicide-toolkit-schools>

Recommendations for Reporting on Suicide: www.reportingonsuicide.org

Education Model School Policy: <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/education/model-school-policy/>

Five Students Among Eight Killed in Brazil School Shooting

The New York Times, March 13, 2019

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/13/world/americas/brazil-school-shooting.html>

SÃO PAULO, Brazil — At least five students were killed in Brazil on March 13, 2019 when two assailants, both former students, broke into a school and opened fire, police officials said.

The attackers also killed two employees at the Professor Raul Brasil school in Suzano, a satellite city of São Paulo, and injured at least nine other students. The police said the assailants fatally shot the owner of a nearby car rental outlet on their way to the school.

The attackers killed themselves after their rampage.

The police said the students killed were all about 15 years old.

“It’s the saddest scene I’ve witnessed in my whole life,” the São Paulo governor, João Doria, said after visiting the school. He declared three days of mourning.

The president, Jair Bolsonaro, expressed his condolences via Twitter, calling the attack a “monstrosity and cowardice without comparison.”

The police identified the assailants as Luiz Henrique de Castro, 25, and Guilherme Tauci Monteiro, 17, who was enrolled as recently as last year. Officials said they were still investigating possible motives.

Security video footage showed the attackers pulling up to the front gate of the public school, which has more than 1,000 students. The assailants entered the campus about 9:30 a.m. local time, when students would have been on a snack break.

According to the police, the assailants most likely did not arouse suspicions because they were both former students.

The attackers wore masks during the attack and were armed with a handgun outfitted with an automatic reloader, a crossbow, a hatchet and fake explosives, the police said.

“This is an incredibly sad episode for the families, for Suzano and São Paulo and all of Brazil,” the state secretary of public security, Gen. João Camilo Pires de Campo, said at a news conference.

While gun violence is common in Brazil, school shootings are relatively rare. One happened in 2011, when a former student shot and killed 12 children at a school in Realengo, in the state of Rio de Janeiro.

Critics of Mr. Bolsonaro, Brazil’s new right-wing president, pointed out that Wednesday’s attack came as he has made it easier for Brazilians to have firearms.

Amateur video of the attack posted on social media showed bodies on the ground and students screaming and running.

One distraught mother told Globo News, a Brazilian television network, that her 12-year-old daughter called her in the middle of the shooting. “She said, ‘Mom, come quick. There’s been a lot of shooting. People are injured, people are dead.’”

A school cook serving snacks said she hustled about 50 children into the kitchen as soon as she realized what was going on and pushed the freezer in front of the door.

“We had to remain calm because we had children inside with us,” the cook, Silmara Cristina Silva de Moraes, told Globo News. “But it was nerve-racking because there was a lot of shooting, a lot, and a lot of panic.”

Characteristics of School-Associated Youth Homicides - United States, 1994 - 2018

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, Published January 25, 2019

<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/68/wr/pdfs/mm6803a1-H.pdf>

This is a recently released, 9 page report, you may be interested in looking at further.

New Zealand Shows America's Mass Shootings Have Global Consequences

USA Today, March 15, 2019

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/investigations/2019/03/15/new-zealand-mosque-shooting-brazil-school-shooting-american-inspiration-copycats-social-media/3175271002/>

The Australian suspect who claimed responsibility for the New Zealand shootings that killed at least 49 people in two mosques wrote a 70-page anti-immigrant manifestocalling himself a racist, ethno-nationalist and fascist. He also called President Trump a symbol of "renewed white identity." Trump has condemned the attack. (In 2017, a man in Quebec killed six people at a mosque and cited similar influences.) In a less publicized shooting this week, two young men killed seven people at a school in Brazil. Police say they were obsessed with the 1999 Columbine attack. (Shooters in Germany, Canada and Finland have also cited Columbine.)

Mass shootings are often called a uniquely American problem, but experts say violence here has global impact. "There's no doubt that previous mass shooters in the United States have been imitated by shooters in the U.S. and outside it," said Adam Lankford, a criminal justice professor at the University of Alabama who studies mass shootings, noting "the influence of America culturally and cross-culturally." The United States is ranked No. 1 in international influence, based on its economic and military power as well as its "cultural imprint," according to U.S. News & World Report. "America's culture and actions are contagious, as the U.S. draws a lot of attention," said Gary Slutkin, founder of Cure Violence, a nonprofit which treats gun violence like a disease.

Though the U.S. has long held a position of cultural dominance in the world, news of American mass shootings — and the motivations and ideologies behind them — spread faster and farther than ever. CNN International is seen in more than 200 countries and territories worldwide. And if it weren't on TV, it would still be on Twitter. "It's the viral nature of school shootings, the ubiquity of technology and the spread of ideology ... that have made mass shootings a global problem," said Colin Clarke, an adjunct political scientist at the RAND Corporation and a senior research fellow at the Soufan Center, which does research on human security. "But while we pay a lot of attention to jihadist terrorism, we've been very slow and stubborn to realize that right-wing terrorism is very global, too."

Social media amplifies hate, said Richard Cohen, president of the Southern Poverty Law Center, which tracks hate groups. "The atrocity in New Zealand shows us, once again, that we're dealing with an international terrorist movement linked by a dangerous white supremacist ideology that's metastasizing in the echo chambers of internet chat rooms and on social media networks," he said. The mosque shooting suspect used a helmet-mounted camera to capture footage of the killings which he streamed live on Facebook and posted on YouTube and Twitter. It has since been removed. An extremely small percentage of people commit mass shootings, but it is in these spaces online, Lankford said, where toxic ideas spread, and where many alienated men feel safe to worship the gunmen who terrorize the rest of us. Lankford says he's presenting a new study at the National Science Foundation next month showing that since 2010 there's been a more than 80-percent increase in highly lethal mass shooters that were influenced by a previous attacker.

A 2016 paper presented at the American Psychological Association's annual convention blamed "media contagion" for an increase in mass shootings. The authors wrote: "We would argue identification with prior mass shooters made famous by extensive media coverage, including names, faces, writings, and detailed accounts of their lives and backgrounds, is a more powerful push toward violence than mental health status or even access to guns." Indeed, the majority of gun deaths in the U.S. are due not to mass shootings but to suicide, which also has a contagion effect. Mass shooting contagion is particularly heightened for 13 days after an event, according to a 2015 analysis by researchers at Arizona State University. Some shooters, however, spend much more time planning their attacks. The New Zealand shooter claims he planned for two years.

Evidence shows mass shootings often have strong copycat effects, particularly for a certain kind of offender, said Jonathan Metzler, a professor of sociology and psychiatry at Vanderbilt University and author of *Dying of Whiteness: How the Politics of Racial Resentment Is Killing America's Heartland*. "The thing that's being exported is not just mass shootings, it's a particular form of hate and hate crimes that blames immigrants and outsiders and people who look different," Metzler said. "It's impossible to see this crime and this mass murder just as a mass shooting. It took place in the context of the global spread of white nationalism."

School Safety Newsletter

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